

Message Text

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43

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 NEA-11 ISO-00 FEA-02 INT-08

COME-00 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 DRC-01 /169 W

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P R 051425Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6334

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDOC

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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DEPT ALSO FOR TIEP

POUCHED BAGHDAD CAIRO AND DAMASCUS

EO 11152: NA

TAGS: ENERGY

SUBJ: SAUDI MINISTERS ON ENDING OIL EMBARGO

SUMMARY: IN RECENT SEPARATE INTERVIEWS IN BEIRUT PRESS,
SAUDI FONMIN QUOTED AS SAYING OIL EMBARGO AGAINST US
WILL END WHEN IT "ASCERTAINED THAT US NO LONGER FOLLOWING
ATTITUDES ALIGNED WITH ISRAEL," WHILE SAUDI DEFMIN
QUOTED AS SAYING SAUDIS WOULD LIFT EMBARGO "IN THE
EVENT OF AN HONORABLE SOLUTION TO THE PALESTINE PROBLEM."
END SUMMARY

1. IN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED FEB 3 IN BEIRUT DAILY AL
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ANWAR, SAUDI ARABIAN FOREIGN MIN SAQQAF QUOTED

AS SAQING, "THE FLOW OF ARAB OIL (TO US) WILL BE RESUMED WHEN IT IS ASCERTAINED THAT (US) IS NO LONGER ADOPTING ATTITUDES ALIGNED WITH ISRAEL. THE AIM OF THE EMBARGO HAS NEVER BEEN TO INFLICT PUNISHMENT ON ANYONE. THE AIM WAS TO DRAW WORLD ATTENTION TO THE MID EAST CRISIS AND SECURE SUFFICIENT CARE FOR IT IN ORDER THAT A SETTLEMENT MAY BE REACHED UNDER WHICH THE ENEMY WOULD WITHDRAW FROM OUR TERRITORIES AND OUR HOLY PLACES. UNDOUBTEDLY THIS WEAPON IS READY IN THE HANDS OF THE ARABS FOR USE AGAINST SOME STATES IF FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THEM SUFFER A SETBACK." ASKED TO COMMENT ON US POLICY TOWARD MID EAST CRISIS, SAQQAF REPORTEDLY SAID, "I HAVE FULL CONVICTION THAT THE US HAS, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE 1967 AGGRESSION, BEEN ACTING SERIOUSLY TO ACHIEVE A SETTLEMENT OF THE ARABS' CONFLICT WITH THEIR ENEMY, ISREAL. THIS IS BEST INDICATED BY THE MOVEMENTS OF ITS SEC OF STATE IN THE AREA AND HIS ACHIEVEVENT OF SOME SUCCESS."

2. FOREGOING FROM ARAB WORLD (NEWS DIGEST) SUMMARIZATION OF AL ANWAR STORY. BEIRUT DAILY STAR TRANSLATION SAID SAQQAF DESCRIBED THE SECRETARY'S SUCCESS AS "PARTIAL" AND SAID THIS TERM INDICATED THAT EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT ALONG SUEZ CANAL WOULD NOT BY ITSELF BE ENOUGH TO PERSUADE THE ARABS TO LIFT THE EMBARGO.

3. ACCORDING TO A TRANSLATION IN THE MID EAST ECONOMIC SURVEY (MEES) FEB 1, BEIRUT WEEKLY AL-USBA AL ARABI OF JAN 28 CARRIED INTERVIEW WITH SAUDI DEF MINISTER AMIR SULTAN IN WHICH MIN DECRIED AS FOREIGN-INSPIRED "RECENT RUMORS PUBLISHED IN THE ARAB PRESS CASTING DOUBT ON ARAB SOLIDARITY, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE ROLE OF SAUDI ARABIA, IN THE PRESENT ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT. REGARDING US-SAUDI RELATIONS, MIN QUOTED AS SAYING, "THE US IS OUR FRIEND AND THERE ARE NO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US EXCEPT FOR FACT THAT US IS SYMPATHETIC TO ISRAEL AND SUPPORTS IT IN ITS AGGRESSION AGAINST THE ARAB STATES. THIS WAS THE DIRECT CAUSE THAT LED THE KINGDOM TO CUT OFF OIL SUPPLIES TO AMERICA. WE ARE PREPARED TO RESUME OIL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SHIPMENTS IN THE EVENT OF AN HONORABLE SOLUTION TO THE PALESTINE PROBLEM".

COMMENT: WHATEVER EXACT MEANING AND ACCURACY OF ABOVE, NEWS EDITOR ITAYIM VOLUNTEERED TO EMBOFF LAST WEEK THAT ALL HIS SOUNDINGS INDICATE THAT LIFTING OF SAUDI EMBARGO AGAINST US "IS LINKED TO" DISENGAGEMENT ON SYRIAN FRONT. HE THOUGHT OFFICIAL STATEMENTS FROM

WASH LAST WEEK IMPLYING EARLY LIFTING OF EMBARGO
WAS OVERLY-OPTIMISTIC.
HOUGHTON

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Disposition History: n/a
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30 JUN 2005

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